

Address at Providence, Rhode Island

Harry S. Truman, 1952

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President who has enough respect for your intelligence to talk sensibly to you about the issues.

His Republican opponent makes no secret of the fact that he is trying to play on your emotions, instead of appealing to your commonsense. And he has sunk pretty low in that emotional campaign, as I'm going to prove to you.

The Republican candidate for President is a professional soldier. We are entitled to assume that the one thing he understands is war.

Now, I have taken steps to see to it that he is kept informed during this campaign about the situation in Korea. I have seen to it that he gets regular top secret reports from the Central Intelligence Agency.

I wanted him to have all the facts on the Korean situation, so that he could be guided by them—so he wouldn't say anything he didn't mean, as a result of being in the dark about what was going on.

For one thing, I didn't want him to make any mistakes in the heat of the campaign that might harm the United States—and the United Nations—in their efforts to defend the free world against Communist aggression.

I honestly believed that he would refuse to play politics with our foreign policy—especially that part of it which involves the sacrifice of our American boys in Korea. But I was wrong about that.

I was bitterly disappointed a few days ago when the Republican candidate for President told the people of the United States a cruel and deceitful thing.

You remember what he said. He said we ought to pull our soldiers out of the fighting in Korea and let the South Korean army fight the Red Chinese hordes alone.

That sounded like a promise, and he meant it to sound like a promise. It sounded like something he would do right away. But it was just an empty campaign speech to get votes.

I know what his words sounded like to the mothers and fathers of this country.

They sounded like words of hope, of relief and comfort from worry and heartache.

That's what made them so cruel. The Republican candidate for President held out a false hope to the mothers of America, in an effort to pick up a few votes. That is a most contemptible thing to do.

It was irresponsible, because the Republican candidate knows that we cannot pull our troops out of Korea now. We can't do it unless we are willing to say to Stalin: "We quit—you win."

And we are not going to quit Korea or anywhere else when it comes to resisting Communist aggression.

Now, my friends, the Republican candidate knows as well as I do that for 18 months we have been training South Korean troops day and night. We have been training them to take over more and more of the fighting out there.

We have built up and are building a strong Korean army. They are a fine fighting force, as they have proved in the recent battles for White Horse Hill.

And we ought to remember that those brave South Koreans are not only fighting for their own freedom from Communist aggression. They are fighting to help protect the freedom over all the world, including the United States.

Now, my friends, the Republican candidate for President also knows that as long as the Communists are throwing all they can into the fight, the South Koreans cannot stand up against the entire Chinese Red Army.

No top military commander in Korea ever believed that they could, and the General who is running for President on the Republican ticket doesn't believe it either.

He knows better—and when he talks about pulling out of Korea, he is deliberately playing partisan politics with something that ought to be above partisan politics.

We are doing everything that can be done to bring the fighting in Korea to an honorable conclusion.

One of your own Rhode Island citizens has